THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

ROUND TABLE

THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

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A Radio Discussion by AVERY O. CRAVEN
CHARLES E. MERRIAM *and* T. V. SMITH

Including
A Special Supplement
on Thomas Jefferson

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Around the Round Table . . . .

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CHARLES E. MERRIAM, distinguished service professor emer tus of political science at the University of Chicago, sinc 1933 has served as a member and vice-chairman of the Na tional Resources Planning Board. Professor Merriam, who has been member of the political science department of the University of Chicag since 1900, was a member of President Hoover's Commission on Recen Social Trends and is now a member of the President's Committee on Ac ministrative Management. Professor Merriam has been active in Chicag politics and served three terms as alderman in the City Council and i 1911 was narrowly defeated for mayor of Chicago. Professor Merriam a native of Iowa and studied at Lenox College and the State University Iowa. He received his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia Unive sity and has studied and traveled widely abroad. He is the author many books, among which are: *A History of American Political Theori* (1903); *Primary Elections* (1908); *American Political Ideas, 1865–192* (1921); *The American Party System* (1922); *New Aspects of Politics* (1925 *Four American Party Leaders* (1926); *Political Power* (1934); *Role of Pol tics in Social Change* (1936); *The New Democracy and the New Despotis* (1939); *Prologue to Politics* (1939); *What Is Democracy?* (1941); and *C the Agenda of Democracy* (1941).

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THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

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MR. SMITH: Gentlemen, we are dedicating this week at Washington—as all the world knows or will know—a monument to Thomas Jefferson, the third of the trinity of our national secular saints—Washington, Lincoln, and now Jefferson.

MR. CRAVEN: A hundred years ago, when Jefferson's birthday came around, one of my colleagues tells me, few people paid any attention to it; and yet today, everywhere, the man is being mentioned and commented upon. But what do we really know about the man and his influence?

MR. MERRIAM: For three generations Jefferson has never been fully understood, but today he's coming into his own. What's the one thing about Jefferson that we think is outstanding?

MR. SMITH: I think that it's strictly Jeffersonian that we don't let him pick for us the topics we discuss. He nominated, as his claim to fame, the authorship of the Declaration of Independence, the Statute of Religious Freedom for Virginia, and the University of Virginia's founding. But I think Craven is entitled to pick for himself the topic he thinks best summarizes the great Jefferson.

MR. CRAVEN: If you give me that opportunity, T. V., I think that I would say that Jefferson's greatest contribution is the contribution that he made to American democratic thought. He be-

gan with the idea of the dignity of the individual and the capacity of that individual for improvement. He looked about him and found everywhere that men, instead of being free, were in chains. Governments had pressed down upon them and had become great organizations that looked after their own interests and the interests of groups that they represented, but yet did not look after the individual common man.

MR. SMITH: You're almost quoting a phrase from Rousseau, which suggests that Jefferson was deeply influenced by French thought also.

MR. CRAVEN: Yes. He was influenced by French thought, but Thomas Jefferson's great strength lay in the fact that he picked from the democratic theories and the liberal thought of his day, the things that fit the practical American situation. Not only were governments burdens on men but the past, the creeds and doctrines, also, burdened mankind.

MR. MERRIAM: What did Jefferson mean, Craven, by the phrase "The tyranny of the dead as well as the living"?

MR. CRAVEN: He meant that the past, the ideas of the past—the creeds and the doctrines and dogmas of the past—held men in chains and did not permit men to have their own free thinking. The first problem of democracy, as Jefferson saw it, was to free man not only from government but also from the past and from all these factors that fettered him in the Old World that Jefferson knew so well.

MR. SMITH: Merriam, I don't like Craven to emphasize too much freedom from the past, for, while that's true, Jefferson, neverthe-

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less, borrowed more easily and more frequently from Greece and from Rome and from England than any of the other of our statesmen.

MR. MERRIAM: I was going to ask Craven, as a professor of history, whether he thought that Jefferson had no regard for historical trends.

MR. CRAVEN: Oh, certainly, Jefferson had regard for historical trends, but what I'm trying to say is that Jefferson wasn't a slave to these things. The man is not a great creator of political thought, but he is an adopter of political thought. He picked out of the past those things that fitted the American scene and applied them practically.

MR. MERRIAM: What do you mean by saying he wasn't a "creator of political thought"? Wasn't he an original thinker?

MR. CRAVEN: He was an original thinker, but I don't believe that you deny a man some originality of thought if he borrows from the best of the past, do you? I think that that's what Jefferson did.

MR. SMITH: I like that phrase "the best of the past," for on the new monument is written: "That I have sworn upon the Altar of God eternal hostility of every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

MR. CRAVEN: Yes, but let me go a little further. Not only was Jefferson interested in freeing man from the burdens that the past had placed upon him but he insisted that man was capable of being free. He believed that inherent in man was the capacity for improvement and that inherent in man was a sense of justice.

MR. SMITH: Freedom is not a good in itself, then, to be treasured alone in a casket?

MR. CRAVEN: Not at all. Man did not live to himself. Man lived in society and found his happiness in society.

MR. MERRIAM: What do you mean by "freedom," Craven? I'm not clear on that.

MR. CRAVEN: He meant, really, that man should not be burdened by these things. For instance, wars had occupied so much of the time in the past that Jefferson was going to free man from war, because the common man bears the burdens of war. Governments become complex, exist for themselves and the interests of the few; and Jefferson was going to make it possible for common men to be free from complex government. He was going to leave most of the problems to local government. He was going to simplify government. Thus taxes would be light; service to government would be light; and the individual would be free to pursue happiness according to his own ideas.

The next step in the Jefferson program was making man fit to enjoy this freedom which he was going to grant him.

MR. MERRIAM: How did he reconcile this freedom with community control?

MR. CRAVEN: That is the great thing, I think, that Jefferson did, for Jefferson saw that if men were to be free, they had to be free in society. Therefore, he placed upon the individual the necessity, first of all, of being intelligent. He would give the common man the opportunity of public education. He would not only do that but he would enable him to own property and to till the soil. Jefferson said, "You never can find in human history a single case in which you have corrupted men who are tilling the soil." Corruption, in other words, was not known to tillers of the soil.

MR. SMITH: "Virtue is knowledge," as he borrowed from the

Greek, but knowledge itself is not enough unless you have foundations of personal independence.

MR. CRAVEN: Exactly! So that Jefferson thus felt and made his great contribution to American democracy in dignifying the individual, in insisting upon his capacity for self-improvement, and then in making it the business of government and society to provide that individual with the opportunity of becoming a fit person to live in such a free society.

MR. MERRIAM: It's interesting that he, while he was a southerner, undertook to develop the New England town system in Virginia as a means of realizing the consent of the governed.

MR. CRAVEN: I think that illustrated his breadth of mind. Not only that; when he was trying to get rid of the slave trade, Jefferson turned to Varnum of New England when he could not even get the support of his fellow-southerners. Jefferson was always the practical man.

What I'd like to emphasize along this particular point is that American democracy, after all, is a faith—a faith in man and his capacity to improve and to make a decent society. Jefferson is the great man of faith. He did not necessarily believe that all men were free or that all men were equal—a lot of those ideas—but he believed that given the opportunity man could be free; man could be intelligent; and man would be just.

MR. SMITH: Merriam, I'm impressed with what Craven is saying —he was a man of faith—because, apparently he had enormous faith in theory itself, and then he had faith in practice, and he had faith in men to unite a democratic theory and a democratic practice that would spell out progress in the long run.

MR. MERRIAM: Of course, Jefferson wasn't the only theoretician of his time, was he?

MR. SMITH: No.

MR. MERRIAM: There was John Adams, Franklin, and Hamilton, the Federalist.

MR. SMITH: Jefferson, I think, more than anyone else, knew how to put together the tallest theory and the deepest practice.

MR. CRAVEN: That to me is the next step in the story of Thomas Jefferson. I pictured him as a man who gave us the great democratic theory. T. V., how about your talking about Jefferson and the democratic practice?

MR. SMITH: I'd be very happy to talk about that because I think that it was not the fact that he was a great theorist or the fact that he was very practical but the fact that he was theoretical about practice and practical about theory that made him, after all, the patron saint of our democracy.

I mean to say, Merriam, appealing to your days in politics, that Thomas Jefferson understood that you cannot make progress in things collective without going through a maneuvering process called "compromise"—a process that most good men, on the whole, really disapprove of.

MR. CRAVEN: Get down to concrete things, T. V. What do you mean there?

MR. SMITH: I mean exactly what Merriam thoroughly understands.

MR. MERRIAM: Come down to earth, T. V.

MR. SMITH: I'll come down to earth, even to the rich soil of Jefferson's examples.

MR. CRAVEN: Don't get that soil too rich.

MR. MERRIAM: Waste no time in getting there.

MR. SMITH: For instance, Merriam has often been criticized, as what politician has not, for doing things in the name of the community that no high-minded man in the community would do.

As, for instance, Jefferson made a trade with his enemy, Alexander Hamilton, which located Washington as the capital of the nation—that place where somebody has said it sometimes gets above a hundred in temperature but humidity never above a hundred.

MR. CRAVEN: If I remember it correctly, he made it in a rather disreputable place.

MR. SMITH: It wasn't in the "back end of a saloon," as we sometimes say now. It was his own dinner table. But the simple truth is that Jefferson got Hamilton there, and he got some of Hamilton's friends and some of his own friends together, and they cooked up a compromise whereby Jefferson and his followers would support the "iniquitous" debt assumption that Hamilton had, and in return they would get Virginia as capital of the nation.

This was so odious, as a matter of fact, that Jefferson himself describes it as it impressed one of his followers, who had to change his vote to bring it off. He said, "It was with a revulsion of the stomach almost convulsive that my friend changed his vote."

MR. MERRIAM: As a professor of ethics, and the editor of the *International Journal of Ethics*, in which nothing could be more ethical, ...

MR. SMITH: Don't con over my sentence . . . .

MR. MERRIAM: . . . . would you approve his decision?

MR. SMITH: Yes.

MR. MERRIAM: Definitely?

MR. SMITH: I utterly approve of his decision, because I think that this is the most important single thing about Jefferson. I per-

sonally believe that it's impossible for men to achieve the same level of ideality in collective life which they can achieve in their own individual life. Jefferson happens to be the one man who saw that and who practiced it with good conscience.

MR. MERRIAM: What do you mean by "the same level of ideality"? That perplexes me a little, being a layman.

MR. SMITH: I mean that as a philosopher you can worship truth with a capital *T*. But I dare you, as a citizen in the community, even in the university, to go out for twenty-four hours and tell the literal truth in all of your relationships with men, and nothing but the truth.

MR. MERRIAM: Why, I've always been doing that.

MR. CRAVEN: But now wait a minute, T. V., Jefferson wasn't always just the practical politician of that sort. There are in Jefferson's practical political program some rather glorious things, such as the Bill of Rights and the Bill for Religious Freedom—things of that sort.

MR. SMITH: Exactly! I'm glad that you remind me of it, Craven, because the theory of the Bill of Rights was that if you let men retreat to their privacy—away from the demands of other people upon them—you can have there the highest ideals—artistic, ethical, religious—but that these ideals cannot themselves be carried over into practice because the similar, the equal, ideals of other people won't let you carry them over into practice.

MR. CRAVEN: Yet, T. V., when all is said and done, Thomas Jefferson was most of the time working for the success of a political party. Further than that, his political theory and his political practice were primarily aimed at the uplifting and helping of the agricultural groups of the nation, who were in a bad way, as the Hamil-

ton program helped out the merchants and the commercial men and the bankers and folks of that kind.

MR. SMITH: Well, of course! But all I meant was that he was never able to put over in practice one-tenth of what he dreamed of as just in theory when he was in his private capacity.

MR. MERRIAM: What is the role—I'd like to ask you, T. V.—of compromise in democracy? Does it have a special role in the democratic system as distinguished from other types?

MR. SMITH: Yes, it has a special role in that when you meet other people of ideals as stout as your own but different from your own—and you know as well as I that you're always meeting them—you've got to meet them halfway, and they, you halfway. This means that each of you must scale down his highest ideal to a lowest common denominator called "compromise," in order to avoid dictatorship.

MR. CRAVEN: One of the tragedies in American history grows out of that failure to compromise. When some men laid down an ethical program in regard to the institution of slavery and refused to yield an inch and refused to compromise, then the whole democratic procedure came to nothing. It broke down, and we had the most undemocratic thing you can possibly have—a civil war.

MR. SMITH: Yes. We have discussed that general problem on the University of Chicago ROUND TABLE. We shall discuss it again on the University of Chicago ROUND TABLE. But now let me emphasize, on this same ROUND TABLE, that the greatest difficulty that democratic government has to meet is that the highest-minded citizens themselves think disreputable, by way of procedure, what alone is the procedure that can be followed in political life.

MR. MERRIAM: Then you can't be a compromiser without being regarded as a cynic?

MR. SMITH: No.

MR. MERRIAM: Therefore, not to be followed.

MR. SMITH: No; he can't be a compromiser without being regarded as something that he ought not to be, but he is the iron railings that keep the drunken idealist from falling off into the abyss. What we can ask of men is that, in arranging the public compromises so as to meet other idealists halfway, a man shall not compromise himself in making compromises of the issues at hand.

MR. CRAVEN: Yet, Smith, basic in the whole Jefferson approach was the idea of the ethical obligation of the individual always to sacrifice his own ends toward the social good.

MR. SMITH: Yes, exactly so. But what Jefferson illustrated—and then I'm going to give Merriam his chance—is simply the fact that you can recognize one type of ethics for public life, another type of ethics for private life, as you can recognize one sphere for the state and another sphere for religion. A man does not have to compromise his private ideals that are very high through the compromises that are made necessary by political life.

But, Merriam, I see that you're bursting to talk with your own point, so I defer.

MR. MERRIAM: No. I was listening with great deference, sir.

But if you ask me, and I understand that's what you intended to ask me at any rate, what I regard as the outstanding Jeffersonian contribution to democracy, I would say that one of the neglected aspects of Jefferson was his capacity as a national planner.

MR. SMITH: That's because we haven't believed in national planning until recently.

MR. MERRIAM: Perhaps because we haven't known what Jefferson was doing from that point of view.

Mr. Craven: But specifically, Merriam, what do you mean when you talk about national planning in Jefferson's day?

Mr. Merriam: I would classify together Jefferson and Hamilton as the two original great American planners. Hamilton planned for the United States a great system of commerce, industry, finance.

Mr. Smith: Utterly indispensable, as it turned out to be.

Mr. Merriam: Utterly indispensable, he thought.

Mr. Craven: Not only that, but something that was of particular interest to one group in American life.

Mr. Smith: And Jefferson was interested in another group.

Mr. Merriam: Jefferson planned for a great agricultural economy; he planned a great land system. He planned for the abolition of primogeniture and entail in the State of Virginia.

Mr. Smith: Equally indispensable.

Mr. Merriam: Equally indispensable; and he planned for a free land system in the Northwest Territory. Isn't that correct, Craven?

Mr. Craven: That's correct. But I would go a little further than that, and I would call attention to the fact that American democracy isn't all the result of planning, Jefferson's or anybody else's. After all, much of American democracy and much of the things that we think of in terms of liberty and equality have come from the experience of crossing a great, raw, open continent that developed individualists who had to stand on their own feet simply because there weren't any other feet to stand on.

Mr. Smith: Jefferson even planned it that way, didn't he, Merriam?

Mr. Merriam: We crossed the great continent with a sense of direction, with ideas of liberty and equality and justice, and the

general welfare for the pursuit of happiness. Otherwise, we'd have been like the Indians roaming across the plains.

MR. SMITH: Jefferson planned the great Northwest, too, didn't he; and the whole West, for us to be individualists in?

MR. CRAVEN: That's perfectly true. I would add one other thing—that he planned in that Northwest for public education. He went further than that; he planned to be rid of slavery in that territory.

MR. MERRIAM: Well, now, how do you link the two systems together—that is, development of public lands to be freed from the land speculators—land for as many people as could be put in there—and education as a part of the land-planning scheme, where, by setting aside certain public lands for educational purposes, you have the perfect combination?

MR. CRAVEN: May I press my point just a little further? It seems to me that too often we have been thinking of American democracy as the product of our own conscious effort. So much of our freedom, so much of our equality, so much of all the things that enter into the American democratic ideal have come simply because we had the fortunate circumstances of a great, rich continent. Simplicity itself produces something of democracy.

MR. MERRIAM: I'm a great student of history, but I'm not a historical determinist or an economical determinist. If I have to choose between drifting and conscious effort, I'll try to make an effort.

So, I think not only that Jefferson studied historical trends but that he studied the means by which the resources of the country, both national and human, could consciously be directed toward equality and toward liberty and toward the pursuit of happiness.

MR. SMITH: He didn't let the fact that we're all underfated with

good or bad fortune deter, nevertheless, the use of the efficacy of such human effort as he could command.

MR. MERRIAM: Yes. He was an inventor, you see, personally and politically.

MR. CRAVEN: Far be it for me to minimize the influence of Thomas Jefferson and the value of the ideas. What I was trying to say was that in the past we've been fortunate, and it hasn't been necessary all the time to take democratic theory and apply it. But now that we have turned some corners in American life, more and more it becomes necessary that we consciously understand Jefferson and that we consciously try to apply the democratic program.

MR. MERRIAM: Not only that. We might have had plenty of American land, and we did. But it also seems to me the characteristic thing about America is not that we had a lot of rich and fertile soil but that we had the idea of equality; that we had the idea of liberty; that we had the idea of pursuit of happiness for all men. That's the characteristic thing.

MR. CRAVEN: Yes, but even that equality and that liberty you're talking about came in large part because men went out into the wilderness. There, as I said, they had to stand on their own feet and become rugged individualists.

MR. MERRIAM: The idea of liberty is a very old one. I wouldn't say that dated from the seventeenth century.

MR. CRAVEN: That's true, but when men went West, to a certain extent, they left behind them not only law but tradition and custom and things of that kind.

MR. MERRIAM: They didn't leave liberty behind them, or equality behind them, or the pursuit of happiness behind them.

MR. CRAVEN: Yes, but they acquired liberty simply by going into a great region where there were no customs or laws.

MR. MERRIAM: They took liberty with them as an ideal.

MR. CRAVEN: Yes.

MR. SMITH: Merriam, I'm going to take Craven off your hands now. If I kept him from interrupting you, and if I did not myself interrupt you for a moment or two, would you make a statement as a political scientist, just on your own, as to what constitutes the greatness of this man Jefferson?

MR. MERRIAM: As a political scientist, I would say that Jefferson was unique in that he was at one and the same time a great political philosopher, a great party leader, and a great practical statesman.

As the outstanding political philosopher of his day, Jefferson stood stoutly for human equality, for the consent of the governed as the basis of just political action, for both the promotion of liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as the joint aims of political society.

As a party leader, Jefferson stands unrivaled in American politics. He not only won the elections repeatedly, but he destroyed the opposing party, the Federalists; and he ruled as the sage of Monticello long after he ceased to govern in Washington. As a party and a political leader, he was able to unite theory and practice with unsurpassed skill. Thus, he could take in his stride the very abstract Declaration of Independence, on the one hand, and the Louisiana Purchase, on the other.

As a statesman, Jefferson planned a great practical program of democracy. He did not stop with the phrases "equality" and "liberty." He spelled them out in terms of daily life.

He was for freedom from all tyrannies of every sort, public or private. Jefferson was for a freedom of religion; freedom of the press; emancipation for the slaves; universal suffrage; subordina-

tion of military to civil authority. Jefferson planned to put a floor under equality and liberty: first, through a public, free public land system, matching and complementing Hamilton's commercial system; secondly, through a broadly conceived transportation system (we haven't had time to discuss it here); and, finally, through an American democratic educational system, of which he laid the foundations. Jefferson advocated not only liberty *from* evils but also liberty *for* something—for the pursuit of happiness for all men.

To Jefferson, democracy was a philosophy of the dignity of every man, a faith in the common man and in the community, and of the development of human equality, human liberty, and human happiness through the consent of those concerned.

Mr. Smith: Thanks, Merriam. If I keep Merriam out of your hair, Craven, will you, as a historian, do the same for the patron saint of democracy?

Mr. Craven: To me, Thomas Jefferson symbolizes the United States as an experiment in democracy. He was an idealist who could dream without losing the shrewd capacity to accomplish great material things. He combined the rugged personal independence of the American pioneer with a sophisticated intellectual independence of eighteenth-century liberal thought and thereby adopted it to the practical needs of his day and of his people. He expressed the most basic conception of every American in his insistence that the business of life is living and that the purpose of the state is to make that living more pleasant and more secure. That doctrine dignified all mankind and lifted common men to equality with those who had hitherto believed themselves superior. It made them free but at the same time placed upon them the responsibility to be both intelligent and moral.

It thus produced our peculiarly American type of democracy. It gave us a national faith. It put into the hands of common men a

weapon against all tyranny and all privilege. It also provided them with a weapon against that equally good American group, descendants of Alexander Hamilton, who hold that economic success indicates superior qualities and should confer superior place and power. Therefore, from his day, whenever the few have taken more than their share, when equality in the pursuit of happiness has been threatened, common men have turned to Jefferson as the spokesman of inherent American and human rights. From Jackson to Lincoln to Bryan and to Wilson, and even to the New Deal, he has served their ends, to become a living, threatening force in every conflict.

Jefferson, more than any other man of our past, still lives and stalks our streets. His doctrines, vital as ever, still stand in the way of those whose greed would check the commonweal.

MR. MERRIAM: Now, "T.V.A.," as a professor of philosophy, how would you epitomize Jefferson?

MR. SMITH: As a philosopher, I think that Jefferson had learned a curious and deep thing about life. He had learned, as was later said of Lincoln, that man's mouth is too little for his thoughts. This discovery that man has more ideals than he can handle often drives the weakling to cynicism and the sectarian into fanaticism. Thomas Jefferson survived the discovery to become a personal aristocrat and a social democrat. The sage of Monticello discerned that democracy requires agreement not on fundamental faith but only upon a procedure. It is not a goal but a going.

In this spirit, Jefferson revered all his ideals of truth, goodness, beauty, but without having to inflict them upon others. He could cooperate with others without getting close enough to have to kiss.

This philosophy of duality, of a sort of constitutional double-or-nothing, Jefferson bequeathed to the nation as a democratic Magna Carta. Behind his Bill of Rights, Private Jefferson could live alone

and like it, and did so. Beyond the Bill of Rights, he could go proudly forth to make friends and influence policy, and did so, for this man knew how to compromise a public issue without compromising himself. He discerned in theory and demonstrated in practice how to exercise both the will to perfection and the will to power. He left us constitutional leeway to do the same.

Let, therefore, the monument at Washington give this message to all the sons of men: "Be somebody if you would become your brother's keeper. Cultivate an inner life so rich that you can compensate with a smile for the picayune involved in all public accommodation."

This was the philosophy, I think, of Thomas Jefferson. This is, gentlemen, the meaning of democracy.

The ROUND TABLE, *oldest educational program continuously on the air, is broadcast entirely without script, although participants meet in advance, prepare a topical outline, and exchange data and views. The opinion of each speaker is his own and in no way involves the responsibility of either the University of Chicago or the National Broadcasting Company. The supplementary information in this transcript has been developed by staff research and is not to be considered as representing the opinions of the* ROUND TABLE *speakers.*

Excerpts from

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S

WRITINGS AND SPEECHES

Political Principles and Practices:

Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves therefore are its only safe depositories.—*Letter to Abbé Arnoud, July 19, 1789.*

I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and intelligence. . . . . I think the best remedy is exactly that provided by all our constitutions, to leave to the citizens the free election and separation of the aristoi from the pseudo-aristoi, of the wheat from the chaff. In general, it will elect the really good and wise.—*Letter to John Adams, 1814.*

It is my principle that the will of the majority should always prevail. If they approve the proposed Convention in all its' parts, I shall concur in it chearfully, in hopes that they will amend it whenever they shall find it work wrong. I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe.—*Letter to James Madison, 1787.*

I believe with you that morality, compassion, generosity, are innate elements of the human constitution. . . . .—*Letter to P. S. du Pont de Nemours, April 24, 1816.*

No government can be maintained without the principle of fear as well as duty. Good men will obey the last, but bad ones the former only.—*1814.*

The real friends of the constitution in its federal form, if they wish it to be immortal, should be attentive, by amendments, to make it keep pace with the advance of the age in science and experience. . . . .—*Letter to R. F. Garnett, 1824.*

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the arc of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. . . . . Laws and institutions must go hand and hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. . . . .—*1816.*

Our country is too large to have all its affairs directed by a single government. . . . . The true theory of our constitution is surely the wisest and best, that the states are independent as to everything within themselves, and united as to everything respecting foreign nations.—*1800.*

We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who wish to dissolve this union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed, as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it. . . . .—*First Inaugural Address, 1801.*

Right of Self-government:

What has destroyed liberty and the rights of man in every government which has ever existed under the sun? The generalizing and concentrating all cares and powers into one body, no matter whether of the autocrats of Russia or France, or of the aristocrats of a Venetian senate. And I do believe that, if the Almighty has not decreed that man shall never be free (and it is a blasphemy to believe it), the secret will be found in the making himself the depository of the powers respecting himself, so far as he is competent to them and delegating only what is beyond his competence by a synthetical process, to higher and higher orders of functionaries, so as to trust fewer and fewer posers in proportion as the trustees become more oligarchical. . . . . Where every man is a sharer in the direction of his ward-republic, or of some of the higher ones, and feels that he is a participator in the government of affairs, not merely at an election one day in the year, but every day; when there shall be not a man in the

States who will not be a member of some one of its councils, great or small, he will let his heart be torn out his body sooner than his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or a Bonaparte.—*Letter to Joseph C. Cabell, February 2, 1816.*

May it [the Declaration of Independence] be to the world what I believe it will be (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all): the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition have persuaded them to bind themselves and assume the blessings and security of self-government. That form which we have substituted, restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion. All eyes are opened or opening to the rights of man. The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, not a favored few booted and spurred ready to ride them legitimately by the grace of God. These are grounds of hope for others.—*Letter to Roger C. Weightman, June 24, 1826, ten days before Jefferson's death on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration.*

On Removal from Office:

That some ought to be removed all will agree. That all should, nobody will say: And no two will probably draw the same line between these two extremes; consequently nothing like general approbation can be expected. Malconduct is a just ground of removal: mere difference of political opinion is not.

Education and Religion:

There are two subjects, indeed, which I shall claim a right to further as long as I breathe, the public education, and the subdivision of counties into wards. I consider the continuance of republican government as absolutely hanging on these two hooks.—*1814.*

Say nothing of my religion [reports he said this to a biographer]. It is known to my God and myself alone. Its evidence before the world is to be sought in my life; if that has been *honest* and *dutiful* to society, the religion which has regulated it cannot be a bad one.—*Letter to John Adams, 1817.*

Well aware that the opinions and belief of men depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds; that Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested His supreme will that free it shall remain by making it altogether insusceptible of restraint; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments, or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion.

We the General Assembly of Virginia do enact that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, or shall otherwise suffer, on account of religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.—*Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom.*

I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised, for the preservation of freedom and happiness. . . . . Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people. Let our countrymen know that the people alone can protect us against these evils, and that the tax which will be paid for the purpose is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, priests and nobles who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance.—*Letter to George Wythe, August 13, 1786.*

Freedom of Speech:

Reason and free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error. Give a loose to them, they will support the true religion by bringing every false one to their tribunal, to the test of their investigation. They are the natural enemies of error, and of error only. . . . .—*Notes on Virginia.*

More on This Topic

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What Do *You* Think?

1. In your opinion, is it particularly appropriate that Thomas Jefferson be honored in the midst of the present war? Why? To what degree are Thomas Jefferson's principles involved in World War II?

2. What is Jefferson's contribution to American democratic thought?

3. Do you agree with Jefferson's belief that man is capable of being free, that inherent in him is a sense of justice, and that man is capable of progress? Discuss the political effects of this belief. Discuss Mr. Craven's statement that "American democracy is a faith."

4. What is the role of compromise in democracy? Does it have a special role in the democratic system as distinguished from other types?

5. What is the value of the freedom being fought for now? Is freedom an end in itself, or is it a means to some higher end? Why is freedom of value to you?

6. In what way has Jefferson's philosophy proved to be a weapon against all tyranny and all privilege? Do you agree that "his doctrines still stand in the way of those whose greed would check the commonweal"?

7. What are the moral values underlying a working democracy? In a democracy must men accept the ethical responsibility of restricting their own freedom in the interests of their fellow-man's equality? How can understanding of these moral values be made more general?

8. Do you agree with Professor Merriam that Jefferson today, after three generations of never having been fully understood, "is coming into his own"? Why? What is the significance of the rediscovery of Jeffersonianism?

The People Say . . . .

The following letters are representative of the views expressed by th ROUND TABLE *audience on "The Senate and Foreign Policy," broac cast April 4, 1943.*

*

Trained Group Needed in Foreign Affairs

. . . . I feel that public opinion is most important in all international affairs. However, a key to that public opinion is not to be found in the public press, since the press is a controlled, organized form which seeks to mold rather than express public opinion. . . . . I believe the only remedy . . . . is to put our foreign affairs in the hands of a body of trained political scientists with a knowledge of world affairs, which I believe the average congressman is incapable of having. I believe further that the term of office of these men should be run on the same lines as the term of office of the British prime minister—that is—as long as their work is satisfactory and they receive a vote of confidence at the hands of the *Public*, they may continue, but they would be subject to recall should their policies not meet with public approval. . . . . —*A listener from New York, New York.*

*

"Monday Conference"

. . . . I was surprised that, in referring to the demise of the President's cabinet as an effective advisory body and the need of supplanting it wi another group more closely relatir the President to Congress, no mentic was made of the Monday conferenc that have been taking place until r cently between the President and tl Vice-President, the speaker, and tl majority leaders of both houses Congress, plus perhaps certain cor mittee chairmen. This might seem be the answer but for some reason h been reported discontinued for tl time being at least. . . . . —*A listen from Marquette, Michigan.*

*

Submit Plans to People

. . . . It seemed so odd to me th all these educated gentlemen and of cials could talk all that time and nev even mention the fact that in the S viet Union all government plans a submitted to the people several montl in advance and sent back to the go ernment for alterations before they a again returned to the people for fin vote. Is there some law against rea ing or discussing contemporary go ernments in Allied countries? Ve odd—for the one thing we all want know just now is: How does Russia c it? Just a suggestion.—*A listener fro New Orleans, Louisiana.*

Issue Warning

. . . . What you should have done was to issue a warning to your listeners that they either must take an active part in urging Congress to pass legislation to give us a lasting peace (as the Ball Resolution) or else face another world war. This warning should have been repeated for the duration of your program and during all future ROUND TABLE programs.—*A listener from Chicago, Illinois.*

*

Public Opinion Polls Significant

. . . . I am very much inclined to think that Uncle Sam's nephews and nieces are at the present time in the initial stages of doing something rather revolutionary in this matter of public opinion.

With lobbies, pressure groups, newspapers, even Congress itself, ignoring, misrepresenting, thwarting, defeating the interests and welfare of the public, it has become a matter of necessity that the public find and employ some means of making its opinion articulate and dominant if Uncle Sam is to continue to advance toward democracy. The springing-up of public opinion polls . . . . appears to me to have great, if generally unrecognized, significance as a protest and an effort of public opinion to assert and reestablish itself. Perhaps this is on its way to some form or degree of National Public Opinion Poll. . . . .—*A listener from San Diego, California.*

*

People Should Vote Directly

. . . . Should not the people by constitutional amendment return to themselves the right to vote directly on *basic* policies, by going personally to their courthouse or other established government office and register their petition to vote on such issue, such petition, when signed by a majority, making such vote mandatory? . . . .—*A listener from Miami, Florida.*

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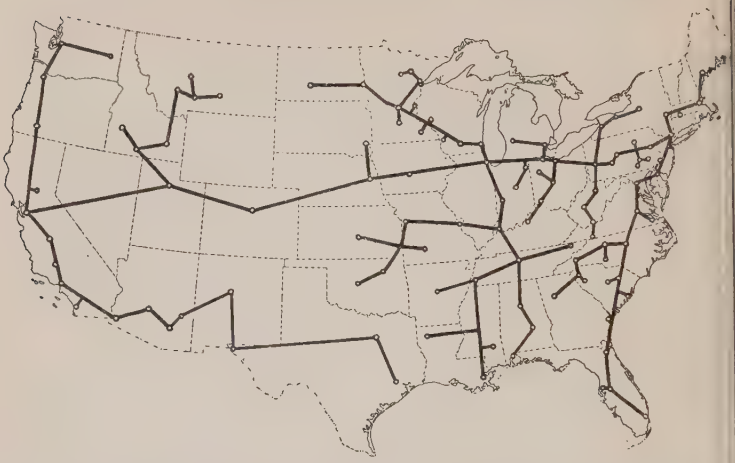

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2:00 P.M. EASTERN WAR TIME

City	*Call Letters*	*Kilo-cycles*	*City*	*Call Letters*	*Kilo-cycles*
Allentown, Pa.	WSAN	1470	Martinsville, Va.	WMVA	145
Altoona, Pa.	WFBG	1340	Miami, Fla.	WIOD	61
Asheville, N.C.	WISE	1400	New York, N.Y.	WEAF	66
Atlanta, Ga.	WSB	750	Norfolk, Va.	WTAR	79
Bluefield, W.Va.	WHIS	1440	Philadelphia, Pa.	KYW	106
Boston, Mass.	WBZ	1030	Pittsburgh, Pa.	KDKA	102
Charleston, S.C.	WTMA	1250	Portland, Me.	WCSH	97
Charleston, W.Va.	WGKV	1490	Providence, R.I.	WJAR	92
Charlotte, N.C.	WSOC	1240	Raleigh, N.C.	WPTF	68
Cincinnati, Ohio	WLW	700	Reading, Pa.	WEEU	85
Clarksburg, W.Va.	WBLK	1400	Richmond, Va.	WMBG	138
Cleveland, Ohio	WTAM	1100	Rochester, N.Y.	WHAM	118
Columbia, S.C.	WIS	560	Savannah, Ga.	WSAV	134
Detroit, Mich.	WWJ	950	Springfield, Mass.	WBZA	103
Florence, S.C.	WOLS	1230	Springfield, Ohio	WIZE	134
Grand Rapids, Mich.	WOOD	1300	Syracuse, N.Y.	WSYR	57
Greenville, S.C.	WFBC	1330	Tampa, Fla.	WFLA	97
Greenwood, S.C.	WCRS	1450	Toledo, Ohio	WSPD	74
Jacksonville, Fla.	WJAX	930	Washington, D.C.	WRC	98
Johnstown, Pa.	WJAC	1400	Williamsport, Pa.	WRAK	140
Harrisburg, Pa.	WKBO	1230	Wilmington, Del.	WDEL	115
Lakeland, Fla.	WLAK	1340	Winston-Salem, N.C.	WSJS	60
Lima, Ohio	WLOK	1240	York, Pa.	WORK	135

1:00 P.M. CENTRAL WAR TIME

City	Call Letters	Kilocycles	City	Call Letters	Kilocycles
Birmingham, Ala.	WBRC	960	Louisville, Ky.	WAVE	970
Bismark, N.D.	KFYR	550	Madison, Wis.	WIBA	1310
Chicago, Ill.	WMAQ	670	Mankato, Minn.	KYSM	1230
Dallas, Texas	WFAA	820	Memphis, Tenn.	WMC	790
Des Moines, Iowa	WHO	1040	Mobile, Ala.	WALA	1410
Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis.	WEBC	1320	Montgomery, Ala.	WSFA	1440
Eau Claire, Wis.	WEAU	1070	Nashville, Tenn.	WSM	650
El Paso, Texas	KSTM	1380	New Orleans, La.	WSMB	1350
Evansville, Ind.	WGBF	1280	Oklahoma City, Okla.	WKY	930
Fargo, N.D.	WDAY	970	Omaha, Neb.	WOW	590
Fort Wayne, Ind.	WOWO	1190	Rochester, Minn.	KROC	1340
Hattiesburg, Miss.	WFOR	1400	St. Cloud, Minn.	KFAM	1450
Hibbing, Minn.	WMFG	1240	Shreveport, La.	KTBS	1480
Houston, Texas	KPRC	950	Sioux Falls, S.D.	KSOO	1140
Indianapolis, Ind.	WIRE	1430	Springfield, Mo.	KGBX	1260
Kansas City, Mo.	WDAF	610	Terre Haute, Ind.	WBOW	1230
Kingsport, Tenn.	WKPT	1400	Tulsa, Okla.	KVOO	1170
La Crosse, Wis.	WKBH	1410	Virginia, Minn.	WHLB	1400
Little Rock, Ark.	KARK	920	Wichita, Kan.	KANS	1240

12:00 M. MOUNTAIN WAR TIME

Albuquerque, N.M.	KOB	1030	Phoenix, Ariz.	KTAR	620
Billings, Mont.	KGHL	790	Pocatello, Ida.	KSEI	930
Boise, Ida.	KIDO	1380	Safford, Ariz.	KGLU	1450
Bozeman, Mont.	KRBM	1450	Salt Lake City, Utah	KDYL	1320
Butte, Mont.	KGIR	1370	Tucson, Ariz.	KVOA	1290
Denver, Colo.	KOA	850	Twin Falls, Ida.	KTFI	1270
Helena, Mont.	KPFA	1240	Yuma, Ariz.	KYUM	1240

11:00 A.M. PACIFIC WAR TIME

Bakersfield, Cal.	KERN	1410	Sacramento, Cal.	KFBK	1530
Fresno, Cal.	KMJ	580	San Diego, Cal.	KFSD	600
Los Angeles, Cal.	KFI	640	San Francisco, Cal.	KPO	680
Medford, Ore.	KMED	1440	Seattle, Wash.	KOMO	950
Portland, Ore.	KGW	620	Spokane, Wash.	KHQ	590

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Buffalo, N.Y.	WBEN	930	Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.	KSTP	1500
Columbus, Ohio	WCOL	1230	St. Louis, Mo.	KSD	550
Milwaukee, Wis.	WTMJ	620	Schenectady, N.Y.	WGY	810
Minneapolis, Minn.	WLB	770			

BY TRANSCRIPTION VIA SHORT WAVE

Anchorage, Alaska	KFQD	790	Juneau, Alaska	KINY	1450
Fairbanks, Alaska	KFAR	610	Ketchikan, Alaska	KTAN	930

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A University of Chicago Round Table Broadcast

APRIL 18, 1943

WHAT ABOUT THE TRADE AGREEMENTS?

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T. W. SCHULTZ, Department of Economics, Iowa State College

JACOB VINER, Department of Economics, University of Chicago

(THIRD PARTICIPANT TO BE ANNOUNCED)

•

SUGGESTED READINGS

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